

**MINUTES OF THE WOODSTOCK OPERA HOUSE
ADVISORY COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 19, 2021**

The meeting of the Advisory Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order at 4:34 pm by Keith Johnson on Tuesday, October 19, 2021 at Stage Left Café. A roll call was taken.

I. Call to Order Advisory Members:

Present: Keith Johnson, Roger Zawacki, Judith Svalander, and Sue Kazlusk.

Absent: Paul Rausch, Anthony Houston, and John Puzzo.

Staff in Attendance: Opera House Director Daniel Campbell and Office Assistant Betsy Cosgray.

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. S. Kazlusk motioned to approve the August 17, 2021 meeting minutes, J. Svalander seconded. Ayes: K. Johnson, J. Svalander, R. Zawacki and S. Kazlusk. Nays: none. Motion to approve the Tuesday, August 17, 2021 meeting minutes passed.

John Puzzo entered the meeting at 4:38 pm.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. **Chairman Report – Keith Johnson** Off Square Music has had their Open Mic 1st Fridays since June and they are considering bringing back the Original Open Mic night in November. They are not scheduling any 4th Friday concerts as of now.

b. **Member Reports**

Roger Zawacki – Theatre 121 just finished the run of Deathtrap with sales uncommonly low at 450 over 9 performances. They were requiring vaccination cards, but they don't feel that caused the low turnout. They have already sold 750 tickets for the 11-run production of Elf The Musical. In response to K. Johnson's question, they will be requiring vaccination cards for the November production as well.

D. Campbell stated many major theaters are asking for vaccinations while it isn't as common with the rural theater community.

Judith Svalander – JSDT is busy with their one-hour Nutcracker show. The dancers continue to be masked and they are not asking for vaccinations for their production. Some of their dancers are part of the Arts Gala on November 6th and she believes patrons will need to show proof of vaccination.

Sue Kazlusk – WFAA will begin their 2021-2022 speaker season on Thursday, October 21st. Their numbers are down from the past. D. Campbell added their sales were down from years past. Along with the live speaker, the Opera House will be live streaming the event for those ticket holders who prefer to watch from home. They are following the governor's mandate of masking only for these productions.

John Puzzo – Friends of the Opera House (FOTOH) are hosting a members-only happy hour from 5-7 pm. Members can bring in guests who may be interested in becoming a member. New members will receive a FOTOH t-shirt. The goal is to not only build their membership, but the levels of membership within the program. FOTOH Lighting of the Square tickets are now available for \$65 which includes dinner, drinks and music.

c. Managing Director Report – Daniel Campbell provided a WOH update:

- Architectural Building study – contacted and received two proposals for completing a structural assessment of the building.
- Artist for the 2022 Art Gallery Season can now apply.
- Arts and Culture for Woodstock Fund – Gala on November 6th to raise money to help support Woodstock artists.
- Community Room Updates – Along with the bar, new carpeting has been installed. A third phase will include the installation of a tin ceiling.
- Improved Stage Access from Auditorium – By looking at old blue prints, it was discovered that on the right side of the stage there is an access for a staircase and doorway to be installed to exit into the annex.
- New Comedy Night – A producer has started a comedy night on the 1st Saturday of the month beginning in December.
- Artist Discovery Series – Sundays in 2022, 4-6 events funded through the IL Arts Council grant.
- Working on new marketing campaign to promote the rentable space at the Opera House.
- Contacted Schuller Shook to work with professional lighting upgrades for the auditorium.
- Annual Christmas Tree Walk has 27 trees this year; the theme is Peace on Earth.
- Parade registrations are available on the City's website.
- COVID-19 Survey results (attached).
- Witches and Wizards of Woodstock will be held on the Square on Sunday, October 24th and will include the use of the Community Room, Stage Left and the Auditorium in the Opera House.
- Project Living History has taken a back burner as daily business begins to pick up. There are still videos that need to be released. Filming is on a hiatus until 2022.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Reorganization Plan – D. Campbell shared the direction the Council went with plans to hire three Executive Directors, two in FY21/22 and another one in a future budget year. The Executive Director of Business Development will be over the Opera House, Recreation Department and Economic Development. K. Johnson stated the Council stated at the September 7th meeting that they will work to bring on more support staff. Discussion ensued on types of positions that were needed at the Opera House. K. Johnson recommended commissioners come to the next meeting with ideas for staffing needs.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Opera House New Fee Structure –

D. Campbell shared the new structure that has been seen by the City Manager and Finance Director. The Rental fee and Labor fee changes will have the biggest impact. Instead of a rental price and a 10% fee, there will be a Rental Fee or 10%, whichever is larger. There is also a cap on the 10% fee depending on the type of rental. Another proposed change is the Labor fee, which would be a flat fee instead of an hourly rate. Another change is having a four-hour set rental instead of being able to rent by the hour. Answering a question from R. Zawacki, D. Campbell said the fees are for each event, not by day.

(Roger Zawacki left at 5:40 pm)

- b. American Rescue Plan Funding (ARPF) & CIP Projects (joint conversation)

D. Campbell asked for suggestions for the ARPF and CIP projects. D. Campbell shared the CIP list (attached) and explained the priorities can be switched every year; the dates next to each project are flexible. D. Campbell introduced to the commission the idea of a third-floor project.

J. Svalander asked about the stage extension that used to be added to the stage. D. Campbell explained the mechanics of the extension were beyond repair and the decision was made not to replace the equipment.

- c. COVID-19 policy – Currently, the Opera House is following the governor’s mandate of masks worn inside. There are no plans to move forward with a stricter guideline.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Motion to adjourn by J. Puzzo and seconded by S. Kazluskus. Ayes: K. Johnson, J. Svalander, J. Puzzo and S. Kazluskus. Nays: none. Absent: R. Zawacki, A. Houston, P. Rausch Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 5: 56 pm
The next meeting: November 16, 2021

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Cosgray